

Accomplishments & Highlights 2022



**Annual Meeting
December 3, 2022**

Bear Tales: Ranger Led Event



At the
Interpretation
Meeting Place

Roasting
Marshmallows
is always a hit



We were thrilled to bring back the Upper East TN Fiddler's Convention this year





The Fiddler's Convention is a major annual event honoring the musical traditions of our area of Appalachia funded by the Friends with a matching grant from the TN Arts Commission.



Nathan Wilson constructed both fiddle and banjo showcased at the Fiddler's Convention.

Fiddler's Convention 2022 draws a crowd



**Over 400 people
attended**



Park Manager Tim Pharis is the driving force behind the Fiddler's Convention. Here, he is orienting youth participants prior to competing in fiddle and banjo categories.



In addition to cash prizes, Tim and his wife, Marion, created old-time pottery trophies for the 1st place winners.

Pick'n in the field before performing



This Erwin Outdoor Festival and Meet the Mountains Festival are a few of several off-site outdoor themed festivals the Friends attend throughout the year to share information about RFSP, fundraise, and sign up new members.

THE
GREAT
OUTDOORS
FESTIVAL



Friends help replace non-native plants with native plants at the Ranger Station



Blue Ghost and Synchronous Fireflies - Viewings



Rocky Fork State Park holds a lottery for 6 nights of guided viewing. **8000 people** signed up this year!!

Friends' Volunteers help Park staff with set up:

- ❖ parking
- ❖ checking in lottery winners
- ❖ providing information
- ❖ distributing night vision flashlights
- ❖ ensure visitors are safe on the trail and at viewing places

The Friends of Rocky Fork State Park present:

WHAT ARE FIREFLIES?

Saturday, May 14

4-6 p.m.

ERWIN TOWN HALL | 211 N. MAIN STREET

From May 9-14, Rocky Fork State Park will hold its annual lottery for programs that will dazzle visitors with the captivating light displays of fireflies... but what *are* they exactly? Are there different kinds? What do they do when they're not flashing?

Join entomologist Will Kuhn for this **free** talk to learn all about the fireflies of east Tennessee, including the famous synchronous and blue ghost fireflies.

Dr. Kuhn serves as the director of science and research with Discover Life in America, a nonprofit partner of Great Smoky Mountains National Park. He'll discuss the natural history and incredible diversity of the region's fireflies and talk about what you can do to support fireflies in your own backyard.

The dates of Rocky Fork's firefly programs will soon be announced. Check Facebook and tnstateparks.com for updates.



DR. WILL KUHN

The Friends arranged for and hosted noted entomologist, **Dr. Will Kuhn** who gave a free public lecture on the Fireflies prior to the viewing dates.

This image by The Firefly Photographer, Radim Schreiber, fireflyexperience.org, shows both synchronous and blue ghost fireflies in Rocky Fork State Park.

We hosted a Members Only Firefly Social at the new Ranger Station followed by nighttime Firefly viewing in the Park

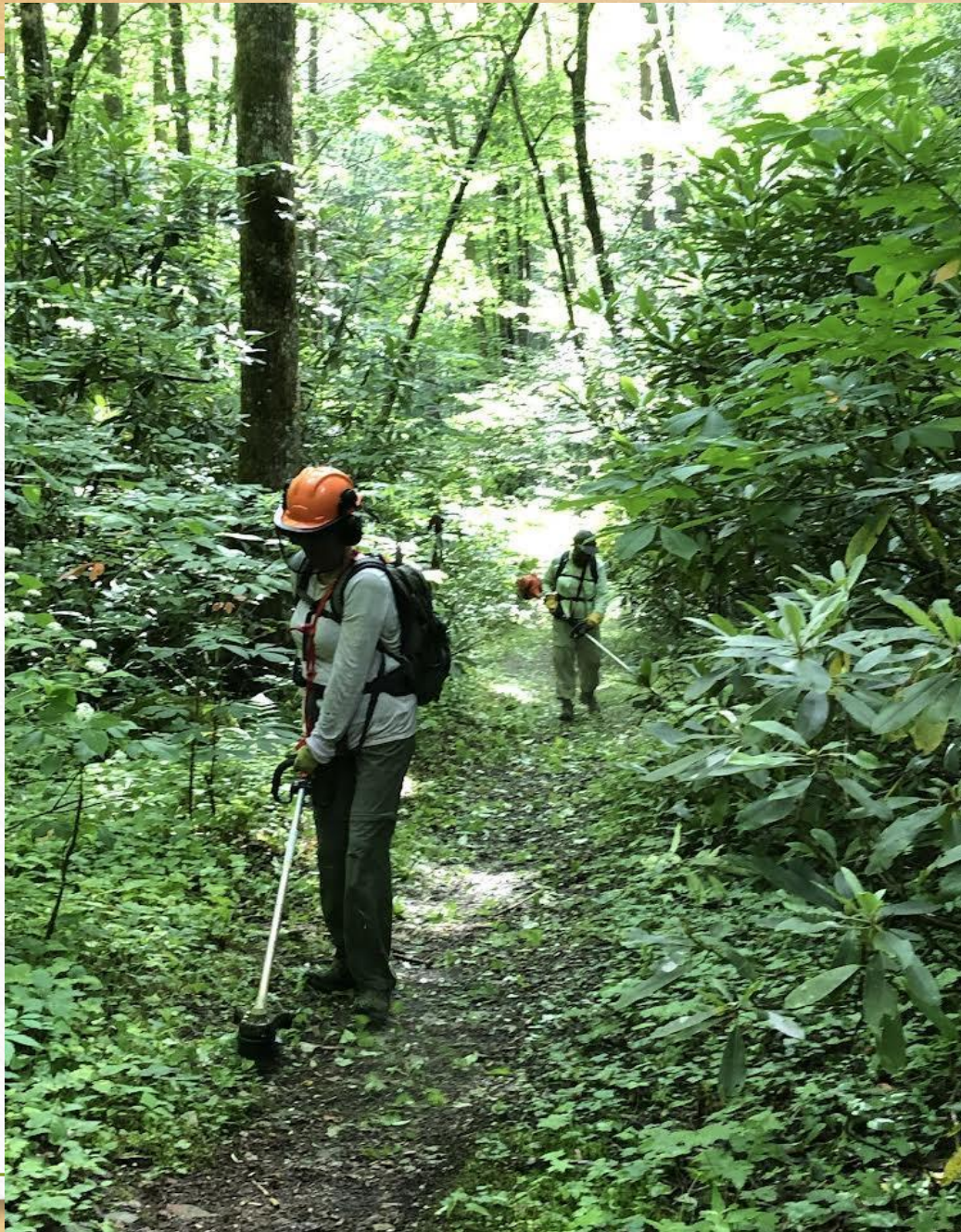


One of the
benefits of
being a
Friend!!

We have fun at events!
Custom cornhole board



Also made and donated by Nathan Wilson



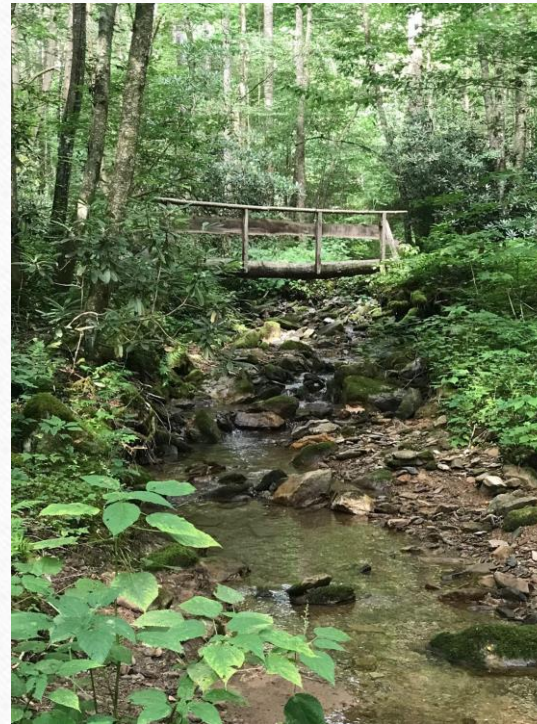
**There's work to
be done year
round at the
Park!**

**Friends maintain
20+ miles of trails
and do
litter pick ups**

Friends offer Guided Hikes in the Park



Spring Wildflower Hike



Loop Hikes explore trails farther out in the park

Two fundraisers in conjunction with State Of Franklin Track Club



The Bear Track Trail Race in the Summer



The Bat Road Race in the Fall



We purchased and donated a dump wagon the Park wanted which greatly assists in Park trail maintenance and other heavy tasks



Friends Board Members Debarking Logs for a Kiosk Project and Learning New–Old Skills



Happy with the day's work of debarking



Building a Kiosk at the Ranger Station



Erwin Apple Festival is a huge annual event!

So is this Fiddle!



Rangers Getting Fired Up for the Haunted Hikes



Ready with Treats for Haunted Hikes



Haunted Hikes Story Tellers Spin their Spooky Tales



Ghostly Hikers at Haunted Hikes

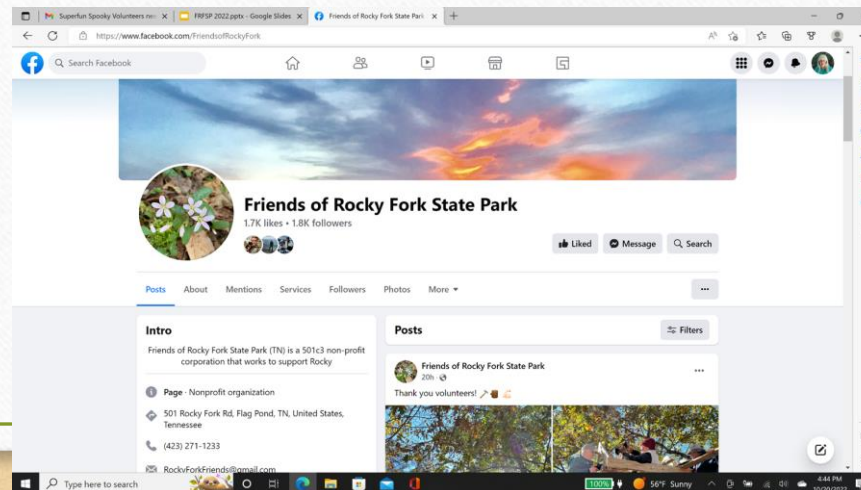
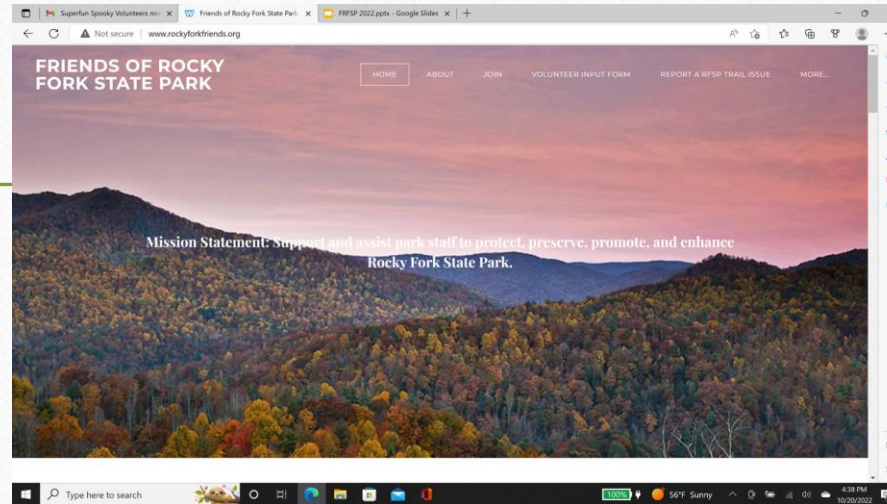


We represent the Friends of Rocky Fork at the TN State Parks Friends Conference each year.



Did you know?
Not all State Parks have Friends
groups to support them.

Friends info is shared at the Park Kiosk and through our email, website, Facebook page and quarterly Member newsletters



Quarterly Member Newsletter Summer 2021 #2

Friends of Rocky Fork State Park

P.O. Box 1, Flag Pond, TN 37657
Website: www.rockyforkfriends.org
Email: rockyforkfriends@gmail.com

Time for our second edition – Summer issue of the Friends of Rocky Fork Member Newsletter.

Lots going on at the park, new faces, trail work and activities, the park is in full swing! Read on and enjoy...

Park News

Welcome to our new Seasonal Park Ranger - Joe Nowotarski

Monthly Full Moon Hikes- Join Ranger Jeff for a stroll into the nighttime forest at Rocky Fork under a full moon. Except for a few special events throughout the year, Rocky Fork is a day use park. So, this event is a rare and excellent time to see the beautiful and mysterious side of RFSF. The whitewater reflects the moon and shines back brightly as we all observe the nocturnal critters like Banded Owls and Yonahlossee Salamanders. Our Full Moon Hikes are special because Rocky Fork is one of the darkest public lands in the state, which allows participants greater opportunities for viewing the Moon. Reservations required \$5

Snorkeling the Fork- Join Ranger Joe in the crisp, cool waters of Rocky Fork. The shallow mountain streams are a great way to cool off on these muggy summer days. Not only will you be able to shed the heat, you will observe many magnificent animals that reside just below the surface of this coldwater fishery. Teaming with salamanders and rainbow trout and local aquatic life native to the greater Blue Ridge Ecosystem, this shallow water snorkeling experience is an event not to be missed. Reservations required \$5

Park News & Insights continued on page 3



Upcoming Events

July 10
Friends Trail Maintenance Day at the Park
Meet at the Park at 9 am

August 9
FRF Board Meeting
Flag Pond School 6 pm

August 20 & 21
Meet The Mountains Festival
Founders Park, Johnson City

In addition, check out the Rocky Fork State Park website for Park sponsored hikes and activities: [Rocky Fork State Park — Tennessee State Parks \(tnplateparks.com\)](http://RockyForkStatePark.tnplateparks.com) or their Facebook page [@RockyForkStateParkTN](https://www.facebook.com/RockyForkStateParkTN)

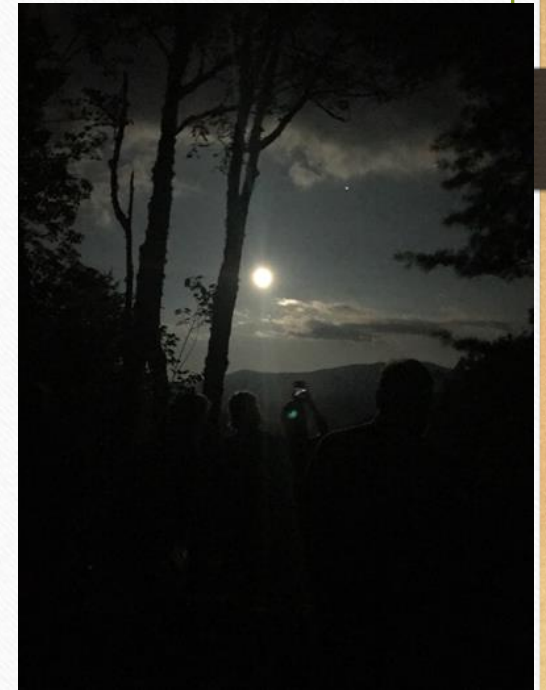
Amazing view from the new overlook on the White Oak Flats Trail
Photo credit: Cory Franklin



**Friends' work on the White Oak Flats Overlook
last year has created many great views
throughout the year and on Full Moon Hikes**



View of Whitehouse Cliffs





Thanks to the
Friends of
Rocky Fork State
Park for another
great year of
support !!